

*Summary*

To the Chairman, Aldermen and members of  
the Totnes Borough Council.

The Manor House,  
TOTNES.

27th August, 1958.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit my Annual Report for the year ended  
31st December, 1957.

GENERAL STATISTICS.

Estimated population (Mid-year).....5,540  
Number of inhabited houses.....1,863.

VITAL STATISTICS

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Live Births	42	35	77
Legitimate	39	33	
Illegitimate	3	2	
Still Births	3	1	4
Birth rate per 1,000 population.....			13.9
Birth rate per 1,000 population (England and Wales).....			16.1
Still birth rate per 1,000 population.....			0.74
Still birth rate (per 1,000 live and still births) .....			49.3
Provisional Still Birth Rate (England and Wales).....			22.4
Area comparability Factor.....			1.06
Corrected Birth Rate.....			14.7
Deaths	<u>Male</u> 43	<u>Female</u> 42	<u>Total</u> 85
Death rate per 1,000 population.....			15.43
Area Comparability Factor.....			0.72
Corrected Death Rate.....			11.1
Death Rate (England and Wales).....			11.5
Deaths of Infants under 1 year			Nil
Deaths of Infants under 4 weeks			Nil
Classification of Deaths is as follows:-			

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
Tuberculosis, respiratory	2	0
Tuberculosis, other forms	0	0
Syphilitic Disease	0	0
Diphtheria	0	0
Whooping Cough	0	0
Menengococcal Infections	0	0
Acute Poliomyelitis	0	0
Measles	0	0
Other Infectious and Parasitic Diseases	0	0
Malignant Neoplasm of Stomach	0	2
Malignant Neoplasm of lung, bronchus	0	0
Malignant Neoplasm of breast	0	2
Malignant Neoplasm of Uterus	0	0

	Male	Female
Other malignant and Lymphatic Neoplasms	5	4
Leukaemia and Aleukaemia	0	0
Diabetes	1	0
Vascular lesions of nervous system	4	4
Coronary disease, Angina	7	4
Other heart disease	9	6
Other circulatory diseases	0	0
Influenza	1	0
Pneumonia	1	1
Bronchitis	1	0
Other diseases of respiratory system	1	1
Ulcer of stomach or duodenum	1	0
Gastritis, Enteritis and Diarrhoea	0	1
Nephritis and Nephrosis	1	1
Hyperplasia of Prostate	0	0
Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion	0	0
Congenital malformations	0	0
Other defined and ill-defined diseases	9	13
Motor vehicle accidents	0	0
All other accidents	2	0
Suicide	0	0

## DISCUSSION.

Births. The crude birth rate for 1957 shows a considerable increase on that of the past few years and after correction more closely approximates with the national average for the year. However, the stillbirth rate has risen sharply and since the figures supplied by the Registrar General are adjusted for inward and outward transfers, they differ from the unadjusted figures compiled locally. Unfortunate though it may be that we have to record a high stillbirth rate, we are able to present a clean sheet for infant mortality. And here it may be interesting to note that the infant mortality rate for England and Wales for 1957 was 23.0 per 1,000 live births - the lowest ever recorded.

Deaths. The death rate for the area is somewhat lower than that of 1956 and, after correction, compares favourably with the national average. The classification of deaths remains much the same, as may be seen in the detailed classification. Deaths from cancer have decreased, 13 as compared with 18 last year, as have, also, those from infection, but, regarding the former, there is still no room for optimism.

## Infections and Notifiable Diseases.

Tuberculosis:	
Pulmonary	4
Non-pulmonary	2
Measles	56
Whooping cough	44
Puerperal Pyrexia	4
Erysipelas	1

Notifications of infectious disease have soared during the year, measles and whooping cough taking pride of place. The measles epidemic did not run true to form. The first notifications were received in February but in March whooping cough took over and reached epidemic proportions in April. After a slow start during the preceding months the measles epidemic burst into life in August and made an equally sudden exit from our midst, leaving no scars, both epidemics being very mild in character.

Tuberculosis. Notifications of tuberculosis have doubled this year and may be explained by the improved methods of diagnosis, greater co-operation of contacts in chocking up, the tuberculosis testing scheme in schools, etc. The mass radiography unit paid us a visit in December, and x-rayed 655 persons -



so their visit was well worth while. Treatment of tuberculosis continues to make great strides and even greater advances are being made in the sphere of prevention.

Polio-myelitis. I am happy to report that, again this year, there was no case of poliomyelitis notified. Poliomyelitis vaccination is now well and truly established and the decision of the Ministry to import vaccine from Canada and the U.S.A. has made it possible to proceed with the vaccinations without hindrance. The general practitioners have been able to share the burden and parents are now given the option of family or clinic. The scheme is working well.

#### Diphtheria Immunisation and Smallpox Vaccination.

Although there are no accurate figures available it is certain that there are few children in this area who have not been afforded the protection offered by vaccination and immunisation. The County Clinics are now supplied with diphtheria, whooping cough and tetanus vaccines for administering separately. The method of injecting one particular vaccine at a time has many advantages but it has also the disadvantage of requiring many more injections. The general practitioners, however, often prefer to give the combined vaccines and so a complete choice is available for everyone.

#### Maternity and Child Welfare.

Maternity. All antenatal examinations are undertaken by the general practitioners and, in addition, expectant mothers are regularly visited by midwives. The Maternity Department of Broomborough Hospital, with its up-to-date equipment, provides accommodation for those mothers who choose to have their babies in hospital. For those who prefer to remain at home, every encouragement is given and, as far as possible, help in the home is arranged if it is required. Our midwives are very efficient and well equipped for domiciliary midwifery. They have undertaken the instruction and preparation of expectant mothers, and for this classes are held at the Welfare Centre.

Child Welfare. The Child Welfare Clinic is held once a fortnight. It is staffed by the Medical Officer, Health Visitor, District Nurse and voluntary helpers. As well as the usual supervision, etc. of the babies and mothers, immunisation and vaccination are available.

#### Hospital Accommodation.

There is no change in the hospital accommodation:

Totnes and District Hospital for acute cases  
24 available beds (including 5 cots)

Broomborough Hospital for chronic cases	135 beds
" National Assistance Part III	43 "
(accommodation for residential cases only).	
" Maternity Wing	13 beds
	12 cots.

This year has seen the most welcome addition to the Totnes Hospital -- a small but adequate waiting room for the out-patient department. It is a charming little room -- a pleasant change, indeed, from rows of chairs in the passage.

Nursing. Two trained nurses, who are also certified midwives, are resident in the town and are responsible for the home nursing and domiciliary midwifery. Their work reaches a high level of efficiency, in spite of the great demands made upon their time and energy.

Ambulance Service. The Ambulance Service provides two ambulances and

drivers and also attendants as required. We have also at our disposal the specially equipped ambulance for the transport of premature babies. In addition there is the hospital car service which is most valuable for the transport of ambulatory cases.

Home Helps. The Home Help service still exists and, though it does not seem to extend, it appears to meet the needs required of it. Most of the work done is in the homes of the older people who are not able to do everything for themselves, but help is also available in cases of illness, blindness, maternity, etc.

Care of the Aged. I am delighted to report the opening of the Rest Room for the old folks, Birdwood House. Situated in a central position in the town, it provides just what is needed for the little chat over the cup of tea.

Pomeroy House is going well, and those who have worked so hard in the cause of the old folks have reason to be proud of their achievements.

Housing. Since my last report four fields in the Weston area are being negotiated for housing purposes. Some four acres of this site will be used for the rebuilding of slum clearance properties. The layout for this has been approved.

Water Supply. No restrictions were imposed on the watering of gardens and no difficulty was experienced with the supply. The quarterly bacteriological samples proved excellent.

Food. 1. The following are various types of food premises:

Shops	43
Food Factories	2
Hotels and Public Houses	19
Canteens	8
Schools	4
Hospitals	2
Hostels	5

2. Food premises, by type, registered under Section 16 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1955:

Ice Cream:

Grocers	5
Confectioners	5
Greengrocers	1
Cinema	1
General Stores	2
Cafes	11
Dairies	3
Canteens	2

Preparation and manufacture of preserved foods:

Butchers	8
Grocers	2
Greengrocers	1
Dairy	1
Factory	1

Dairies registered under the Milk and Dairies Regulations, 1949-1954 11

3. Inspections have been periodically carried out of all food premises; but none need remarking upon.

4. No new educational activity on food hygiene.



5. Meat, etc. (condemned): Disposed to approved firms for digestion; other foods buried on refuse tip after spoilation.
6. There have been no special examination of stocks of food or consignments excepting one case of chemically treated apples.
7. The Ice Cream (Heat Treatment, etc.) Regulations 1947-52 do not apply as none of the ice cream is manufactured within the town.
8. All establishments catering for the public have been circularised and given copies of the Food Hygiene Regulations, 1955-56 and in addition 36 preliminary notices have been served and 14 owners have conformed. The Corporation is now taking action on the balance.

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS. There have been inspected and several preliminary notices were served on various owners, dealing with sanitary matters; but in no case was it necessary to serve a Statutory Notice.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the members of the staff who have given me all the help I required, as and when I needed it, and also the Mayor and members of the Council who, as always, have so staunchly supported me.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient servant,

*Alunabin Davies*

Medical Officer of Health.

